



## THIS WEEK IN AGRICULTURE

*News briefs from and about Idaho's agricultural industry*

**March 21-27, 2005**

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### RANGELAND DROUGHT

BOISE, Idaho - The Rangeland Drought Sub-committee met Monday, March 7, to discuss developing range conditions and water supply outlook for the up-coming grazing season. Generally, the reports were poor with snowpacks in southern Idaho 50-70% of normal, with the exception of the Camas watershed which is reportedly in the 20% range, and the very SE corner where they are at 80-100%. The outlook in north Idaho is worse with the average snowpack in the 25-50% range. At the state Water Supply Committee meeting held Thursday, March 1 reports predicted irrigation supply similar to 2001, however, the mid-March report shows us falling further behind so water supply is predicted to run out earlier in the season.

It is a bit early to predict what range conditions will be, particularly on higher elevation ranges where there is still plenty of time for forage to develop. However, our low and mid-elevation ranges probably have their course already set due to unusually warm and dry weather. Though forage conditions may still develop, we can be sure that most of the state will have shortages of livestock water supply.

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To address these concerns, the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service will allow water hauling to existing watering sites without requiring additional NEPA documentation. Temporary watering sites may be developed depending on site-specific circumstances. Where possible, the agencies will also provide the opportunity to adjust grazing periods to better meet developing range conditions or needs of the permittee. For example, it may be necessary to adjust grazing seasons for earlier on/off dates to take advantage of advanced range conditions. In such cases it will be important for agencies and permittees to work closely with each other to keep grazing rotations as whole as possible.

ISDA will be working with producers and agencies to organize regional meetings to address grazing and drought related concerns specific to those areas. Local conditions, weather outlook, and potential relief programs will be discussed.

Currently, two meetings have been scheduled:

- Idaho Falls, March 22, 7:00 pm, Bonneville County Commissioners' Office  
Contact Bob Hales, Rangeland Management Specialist, (208) 525-7040
- Twin Falls, April 5, 7:00 pm, Idaho Farm Bureau Office  
Contact Kevin Wright, Rangeland Management Specialist, (208) 736-3073

Additional meetings are being scheduled throughout the state. If you are interested in attending one of the scheduled meetings, or would like to have one scheduled in your local area please contact the individuals listed or Ken Crane at (208) 332-8566. Additional information in regard to managing for drought is also available on the ISDA Rangeland Management website: <http://www.agri.idaho.gov/animal/rangeTOC.htm>

*For More information Contact Ken Crane at 208-332-8566*

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## **IDAHO JUNIOR MASTER GARDENER**

BOISE, Idaho - The nationally recognized Idaho Junior Master Gardener Certification program will again be conducted at the Idaho Botanical Garden Wednesdays beginning March 30th and will continue through May 4th. This program provides training to adults who would like to improve their skills in: basic gardening, horticulture, youth gardening, community gardening, youth development, teaching strategies, life skills, and career exploration.

The program features the Junior Master Gardener Teacher and Leader Guide and Digging Deeper, a community gardening curriculum, and highlights 11 other youth gardening curricula. A team of experienced JMG facilitators share great ideas for gardening with youth each week from 2 - 5 p.m. and repeat the class from 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Activities learned each week can be repeated at home, in youth groups, at school, in after school programs or in community gardens. Two academic and teacher in- service credits are offered for completing this course.

*For more information pick up a JMG brochure near the front door of the IDA building, call Kevin Laughlin at 208-377-2107, and check out the JMG website: [www://jmgkids.com](http://jmgkids.com).*

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### **GET A STEP AHEAD OF BUR BUTTERCUP THIS YEAR**

TWIN FALLS, Idaho - For Don Morishita, University of Idaho weed specialist, one of the first signs of spring is the emergence of bur buttercup. In early spring, this low-growing annual weed sends up narrow-leaved stems tipped by solitary, yellow-petaled flowers. By mid-spring, it forms solid, 3- to 6-inch tall mats. By early summer, it scatters its seed and its burs have turned from green to straw-colored to brown.

Those stiff, 1/2- to 3/4-inch long burs are probably how you've made your acquaintance with bur buttercup. "You can't help but notice the spiny burs when you kneel or step on one with a bare foot," says Morishita.

But if you wait until you feel the burs to try to control the weed, you've waited too long, he says. Burning is your best bet for summertime control of bur buttercup, but only if your location permits.

Instead, try to control bur buttercup before it flowers. In its late winter seedling stage, it's susceptible to such foliar-applied herbicides as glyphosate; glufosinate; 2,4-D or trimec. If you'd rather not spray, hoeing and digging works, too.

Bur buttercup can be triggered by the first warm spell in January or February, Morishita says. By the time daytime temperatures have climbed into the 40- to 45-degree range, look for small, gray-green, tap-rooted plants with three to four deeply lobed, fine-haired leaves that look like antlers.

Despite the cute name, bur buttercup is deadly to sheep and toxic to humans as well.

*For more information contact: Don Morishita at (208) 736-3616 or don@uidaho.edu in Twin Falls or communications specialist Marlene Fritz at (208) 384-0649 or mfritz@uidaho.edu in Boise.*

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### **TAIWAN BUYERS MISSION TO IDAHO IN APRIL**

BOISE, Idaho - A large group of high level buyers from Taiwan will visit Idaho in April as part of a US tour that includes participation in the FMI Trade Show in Chicago, IL. Forty-six buyers accompanied by Agriculture Trade Office representatives from Taiwan will arrive April 27, 2005 and will participate in a Food Showcase at the Idaho Department of Agriculture on April 28, 2005. The group is interested in importing wine, wheat, organic products, vegetables and fruits and more. Producers, processors and distributors interested in exporting to Taiwan are invited to participate for a nominal fee. The chance to visit with such a large number of buyers presents a unique opportunity that should produce tremendous results.

*For more information contact, Sherise Jones, ISDA Marketing Specialist at 208-332-8532, sjones@idahoag.us*

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## MEXICAN CATTLE BUYERS TO VISIT IDAHO

BOISE, Idaho - A group of businessmen from Chihuahua, Mexico are working to put together a business package for the state of Chihuahua to raise the quality of the cattle being raised in the state. They are working toward this goal in spite of having the US – Mexico border closed to US cattle. These individuals and the state governor are working to have President Fox and SAGARPA to consider opening the border. They will visit Idaho the week of April 4 to visit Hereford breeders. Their main goal is to find suppliers of good cattle genetics to raise the quality of their cattle and end up producing a total of 20,000 head of cattle in Chihuahua.

*If you would like to have these buyers visit your operation or for more Information contact Jerry Ward at 208-332-8537 or email at [jward@idahoag.us](mailto:jward@idahoag.us)*

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## BEEF COUNCIL BOARD MEETING

The Idaho Beef Council will hold a regular board meeting on Thursday, March 24, in Boise. The meeting will convene at 8:15 am, at the Idaho Department of Agriculture Building at 2270 Old Penitentiary Road, in Lower Conference Room 1.

*For a meeting agenda or additional information, please contact the Idaho Beef Council at 376-6004 or [beefcouncil@idbeef.org](mailto:beefcouncil@idbeef.org).*

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## ISDA MARKETING MONTH AT A GLANCE

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**March 21-26**      Chipping Potato Seminar and Mission

## DIRECTOR TAKASUGI CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

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**March 24**      Speaking at Commerce Business Forum at University Inn - Moscow

Editor's Note: Please forward by 10:00 a.m. Thursday any press releases or information to [rmason@idahoag.us](mailto:rmason@idahoag.us).